



## Love in the Tinder Forest

In the Tinder Forest there lived a marvelous bunny rabbit.

What marked him as marvelous was his fantastic set of ears. They were grey and fluffy and had a marvelous sheen to them, like little flecks of silver had been distributed throughout by a particularly tasteful hand. And as the marvelous bunny hopped through the forest the other animals whispered to each other, “Such fantastic ears.”

The marvelous bunny didn’t particularly love his fantastic ears, he thought they were a tad ostentatious, but rather than spend his time arguing about why he wasn’t marvelous, the marvelous bunny accepted the perks they granted and went about his days. It was these marvelous ears, after all, that afforded the bunny his lackadaisical and romantic lifestyle. The marvelous bunny’s fantastic ears wrapped him in the warm blanket of having something that the other bunnies in the forest, undeniably, did not have

Day after day the marvelous bunny hopped from one grove of the forest to the next, meeting female bunnies and

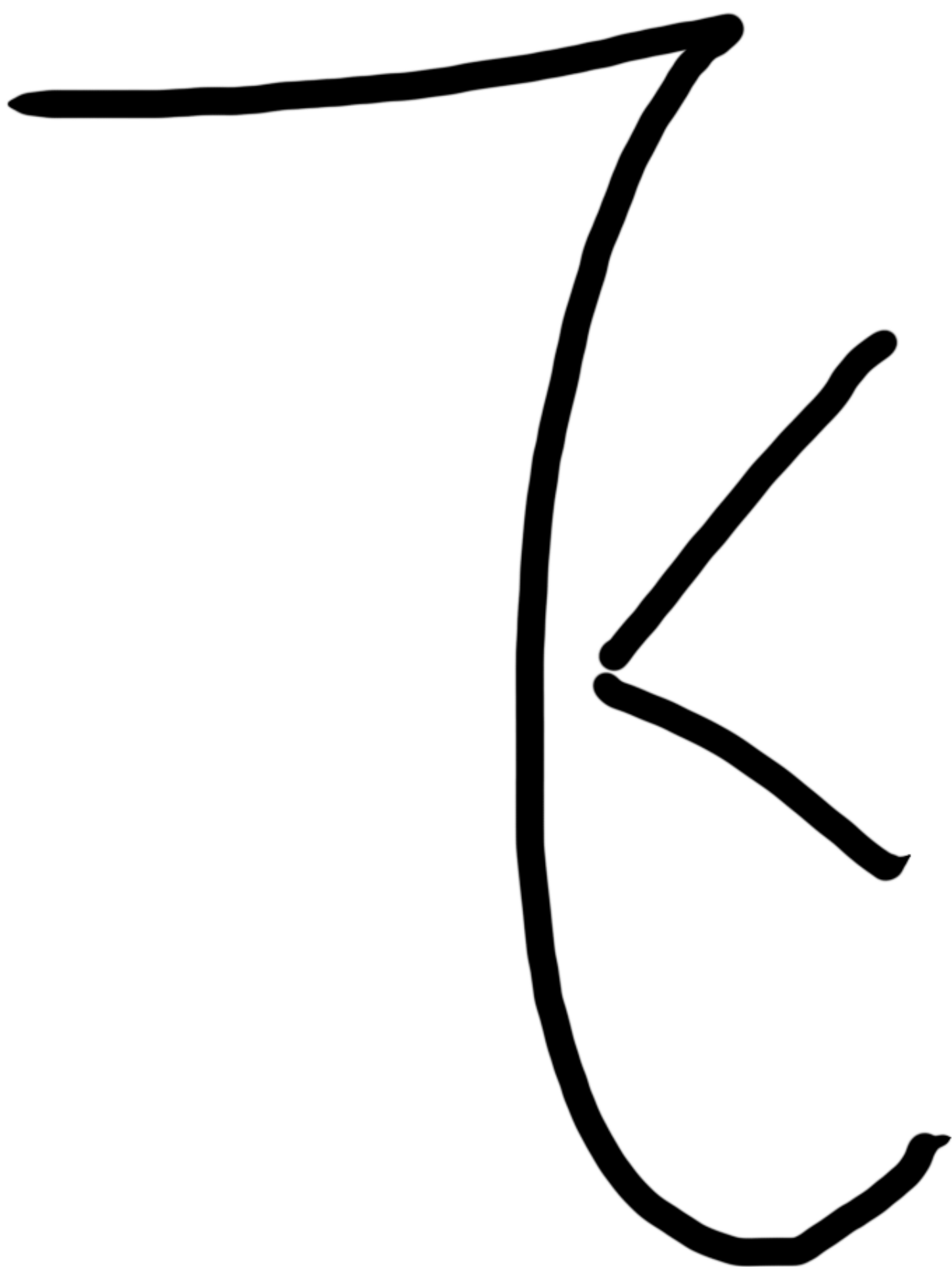
spending the night with them. Then awakening the next morning to the sound of the crickets chirping, the little birds singing, and the jealous frogs croaking “Bounce on bunny, bounce on bunny. How can you be satisfied with just her?” And our marvelous bunny happily obliged those voices, hopping to the next grove or clearing, and repeating the charming and wooing all over, and then waking up the next morning to the sound of the crickets chirping, the little birds singing, and the jealous frogs croaking “Bounce on bunny, bounce on bunny. How can you be satisfied with just her?”

The marvelous bunny and his fantastic grey ears continued on like this, never questioning or regretting his wanton ways; awakening each morning and hopping away. His epic love and curiosity sated him. Exploring the great Tinder Forest was his true love, and each nook and cranny he uncovered made him feel full.

It was not until he came across a small clearing with a beautiful pool of still water that the marvelous bunny took pause. In the middle of the reflecting pool his image stared

back at him. Good gracious, he mused, how beautiful these ears have become. And it was true; the midday sun shone down and caused his grey -with silver flecks- ears to shimmer relentlessly into the pool. They were coruscated on a wavelength hitherto unknown to him. Just then, he heard a rustling in front of him, and, almost as if by fate, a gorgeous brown bunny hopped out of a bush into the clearing. They spent the afternoon admiring themselves and each other in the pool. Then they bounced happily around the clearing and surrounding trees throughout the evening. By the time the moon had reached its peak in the serene night sky, the two rabbits were curled up together in a little burrow just past the clearing, behind a little bush, and around an oak tree.

The marvelous bunny awoke and stared lovingly at his gorgeous burrow-mate curled up so gently against him. But soon his happiness turned to anguish, he remembered that, as it did every day before and would every day after, the morning would arrive soon and with it the sound of the crickets chirping, the little birds singing, and the jealous



frogs croaking, “Bounce on bunny, bounce on bunny. How can you be satisfied with just her?” The thought terrified him; he didn’t want to bounce on. This gorgeous bunny was the singular rabbit that he wanted to be satisfied by, to love and to snuggle, for the rest of his days. How could he prevent those terrible morning calls?

Unable to sleep, the marvelous bunny hopped over to the peaceful pond. He gazed at himself, even more beautiful in the silvery moonlight than earlier, and began sobbing. It wasn’t long before he heard behind him, in a startling baritone, “Hoo, Hoo. Young rabbit, hold your tears. Hold your tears. How could something so beautiful be so sad?” The marvelous bunny, quite shook, could see from the reflection in the pool that behind him was a tremendous grey owl. The tremendous owl, perched in a tree at the edge of the clearing, continued, “Pray now, young rabbit, tell me what it is that has brought out this melancholy. What is it that troubles you?”

“You see,” replied the marvelous bunny through tears. “You see, I am afraid of the sound of the crickets chirping,

the little birds singing, and the jealous frogs croaking,  
‘Bounce on bunny, bounce on bunny. How can you be satisfied with just her?’ Tomorrow morning. I am sure that it will break me away from my beloved, just as it has every morning prior and just as it will every morning for the rest of my life.”

“I see,” she said after a long pause, “I see what you fear, but it is easily solved. For what you fear is just a sound, and if you cannot hear the sound you shall not be tempted.”

“But how can I ignore such a racket?” snapped the marvelous bunny.

“All you must do,” replied the tremendous owl, “is give me your fantastic ears, and you will be troubled no more.”

The marvelous bunny, taken aback at the suggestion, peered at himself again in the moonlit pool. His ears shimmered; they were as calmly perfect and peacefully elegant as ever. But, he thought, the tremendous owl is right. Until I get rid of them, the grotesquely beautiful things, I will never be at peace. I will hear the call every morning and bounce on, away from my beloved. Our

marvelous bunny had made up his mind.

“Yes owl, I accept, I will give you my ears. But how...” He turned around to face the owl, expecting her to be on her perch. Instead she was towering over him, having silently glided down to the pool while the marvelous bunny had been thinking to himself, and extended a massive talon, pinning our marvelous bunny to the ground.

“And may you never hear such a racket again,” said the tremendous owl, as she reached out two talons and clamped them onto the marvelous bunny’s fantastic left ear. Then, pinching and puncturing, she tore the ear from the marvelous bunny’s head. The bunny was shocked, too quickly rent to make a noise, as the tremendous owl began the process again with the other ear.

After finishing, the tremendous, marvelous owl lifted herself into the air with the bunny in one foot and his fantastic silvery ears in the other. She eclipsed the moon with her tremendous, marvelous silhouette, dropped the bunny into the pool, and flew away. The bunny, weightlessly drifting down into the water, was still for a

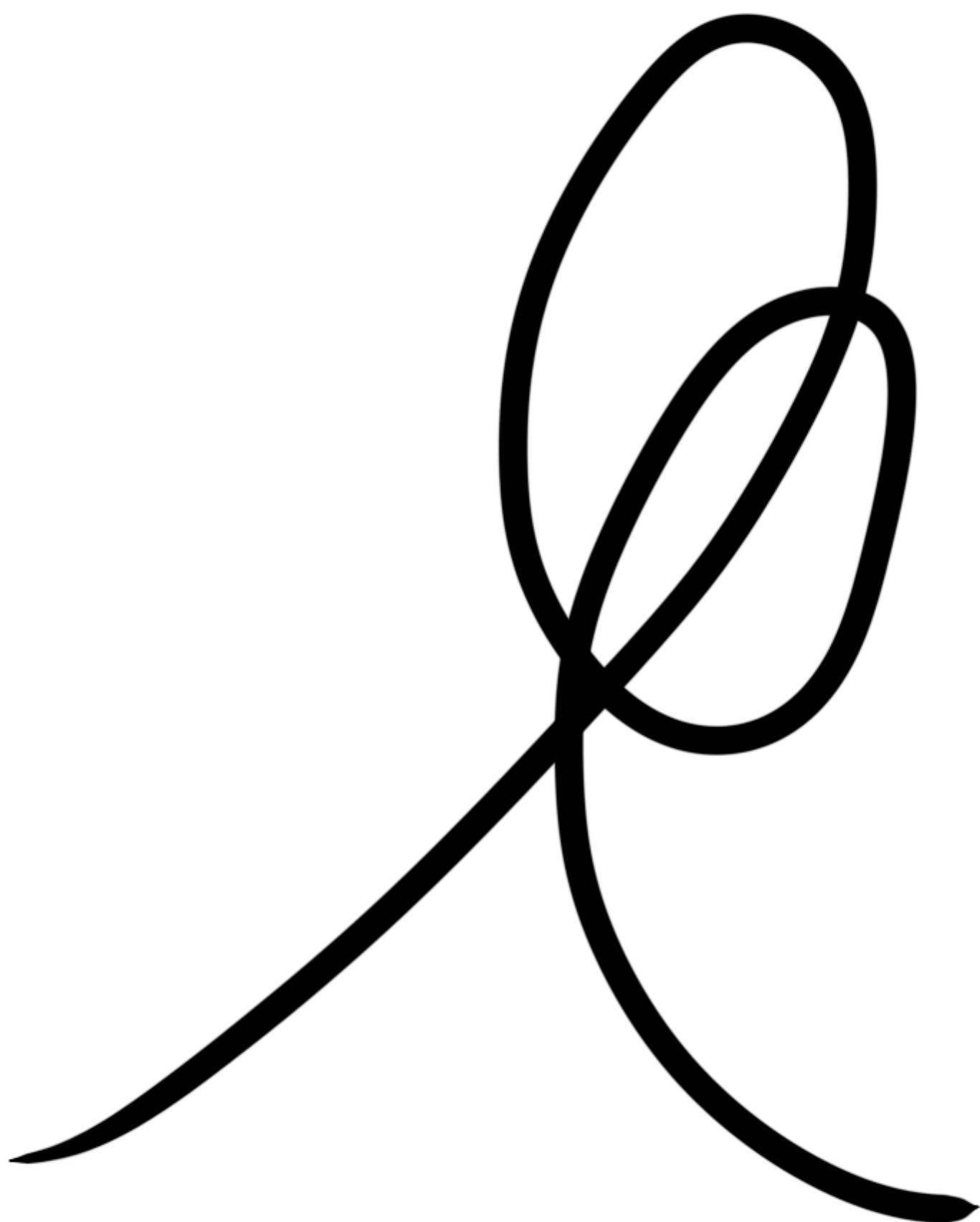


moment before all of his functions came cautiously back to him. He paddled to the edge of the pool, lifted himself onto the bank, and shook himself dry. He gingerly felt the now smooth spots where his ears had been. He peered back into the pool, still rippling, and saw something like himself, but not quite the same. The bunny hopped away in a thick mist of questions, not sure what to make of himself and the events of the night.

The next morning the bunny awoke cuddling his beloved. He looked around with trepidation, expecting the worst, expecting the sound of the crickets chirping, the little birds singing, and the jealous frogs croaking, “Bounce on bunny, bounce on bunny. How can you be satisfied with just her?” But he heard nothing, and his beloved, gorgeous bunny turned over to face him and they smiled together and spent the day hopping, and jumping, and bouncing to and fro- together and happy.

That night they cuddled comfortably. Their burrow was now more complete and inviting. Our bunny could not imagine a more perfect moment. The moon rose over the

pool and lowered back to the earth, as they passed the night curled up as one. The next morning, once again, he did not hear the sound of the crickets chirping, the little birds singing, and the jealous frogs croaking “Bounce on bunny, bounce on bunny. How can you be satisfied with just her?” and smiled. He turned over, excited to see his beloved, gorgeous bunny next to him and begin another perfect day. But she had left. Gone, just like his fantastic ears.



## **MAT Mini**

Cheap LED light

flashing on the tip of my vape

reflected through a beer mug.

What if it means nothing?

Just a vice kaleidoscope

What if it means nothing?

When I walk, dick

hard, through the pub

swaggey at you.

And your only question

is why we ain't fucked before. Well, fuck.

What if it means nothing?

Though, though, though- one syllable

stalling. You're propped up on the hardwood

shelves behind the bar.

I want it,

I do, but

What if it means nothing?

You're showing off

the way you blink

while the song repeats.

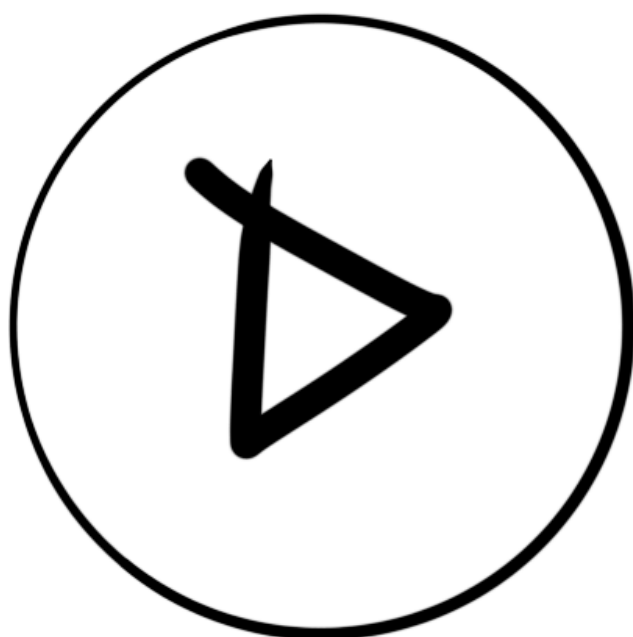
And I wail

about influencers

while the atmosphere dominates.

That's what I really want.

What if it means nothing?



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